

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OC-01 CCO-00 L-01 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-05

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 SAJ-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 A-01

SY-04 SP-02 DODE-00 NIC-01 /046 W

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R 311258Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4150

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UR, PFOR

SUBJ: MFA REPLY TO EMBASSY PROTEST

REF: MOSCOW 13581

1. SUMMARY: MFA INFORMED EMBASSY ITS SEPT 6 PROTEST ABOUT INTERFERENCE WITH DIPLOMATIC COURIERS ON MOSCOW-LENINGRAD HIGHWAY WAS "WITHOUT BASIS." END SUMMARY.
 2. OCT 30 CHIEF OF CONSULAR SECTION WAS CALLED TO PROTOCOL DIVISION TO DISCUSS UNSPECIFIED CONSULAR MATTERS, AND WAS GIVEN ORAL REPLY TO EMBASSY'S PROTEST BY SECTION CHIEF V.V. IVANOV AND FIRST SECRETARY E.M. PASKHIN. AS NOTED REFTTEL, EMBASSY'S PROTEST WAS IN DIPLOMATIC NOTE GIVEN TO USA DIVISION BY ACTING POLITICAL COUNSELOR SEPT 6.
 3. READING PREPARED REMARKS, BASED ON WHAT APPEARED TO BE DETAILED REPORT, IVANOV RELATED THAT ON AUG 27 GAI INSPECTOR OBSERVED FINNISH TRUCK CONTAINING FOUR MEN, AND WHEN HE ASKED TO SEE DOCUMENTS ONLY TWO -- BOTH FINNISH CITIZENS -- COMPLIED. OTHERS DID NOT, SO GAI INSPECTOR BECAME CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE BREACH OF LAW AND DECIDED TO INVESTIGATE. GAI OFFICER ULTIMATELY DETERMINED OTHER TWO PASSENGERS WERE FROM
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US EMBASSY - GORDON HARVEY AND JAMES GLENN. HARVEY EVENTUALLY

SHOWED COPY OF TRAVEL NOTE, BUT FOR AN EARLIER TRIP. HARVEY LATER SHOWED COPY OF CORRECT NOTE. SATISFIED THAT HARVEY AND GLENN WERE FROM AMEMBASSY AND THAT THERE WAS NO BREACH OF LAW, GIA OFFICER ALLOWED TRUCK TO PROCEED. IVANOV VOLUNTEERED THAT HARVEY DID NOT NEED TO SHOW COPY OF NOTE ONCE TRIP REGISTERED, AND NOTED THAT GAI ONLY WANTED TO SEE HARVEY'S IDENTIFICATION.

5. IVANOV DENIED THAT AMERICANS WERE NOT ALLOWED TO PHONE EMBASSY. HE SAID GAI SPECIFICALLY OFFERED TO LET AMERICANS GO TO GAI POST TO PHONE, BUT AMERICANS DID NOT DO SO.

6. IVANOV CONCLUDED BY ASSERTING EMBASSY'S PROTEST HAD "NO BASIS."

7. COMMENT: MFA'S EXPLANATION OF DELAY OF MORE THAN TWO HOURS WAS OBVIOUSLY UNCONVINCING. IN FACT HARVEY AND GLENN IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES AS EMBASSY PERSONNEL AND AS DIPLOMATIC COURIERS PROMPTLY BY PRESENTING THEIR SOVIET ID CARDS AND GAI SHOULD HAVE ALLOWED THEM AND VEHICLE TO PROCEED IMMEDIATELY. HARVEY ALSO PROMPTLY SHOWED COPY OF CORRECT TRAVEL NOTE; AND EARLIER NOTE WAS DISPLAYED AT ONE POINT IN ORDER TO OBTAIN TELEPHONE NUMBER WRITTEN ON IT.

8. MFA HAD APPARENTLY RESEARCHED INCIDENT CAREFULLY, SO EMBASSY'S PROTEST MAY HAVE HAD SALUTORY EFFECT.
STOESSEL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DETENTION, DIPLOMATIC PROTESTS, DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MOSCOW16607
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740311-0969
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974103/aaaaacbv.tel
Line Count: 88
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: MOSCOW 13581
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUN 2002 by rowelle0>; APPROVED <12 MAR 2003 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MFA REPLY TO EMBASSY PROTEST
TAGS: PFOR, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005